

MICHAEL LOKTEFF

INTERVIEW

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Sacramento History Center
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0 Introduction

- :17 Mr. Lokteff discusses the place of his birth in China; his parents came to China about 1932 soon after the Soviet Revolution and Michael grew up in the Sinkiang province of China.
- 2:00 The Lokteffs plan to leave their town in China when Communism moves into the area. . . Michael's parents definately hope to come to America, but must wait at a refugee camp in the Philippine Islands for a long period first.
- 2:56 The trip to Sacramento: Conditions in 1947 in China are difficult (walking, covered wagon transportation typical); small group of Russians travel toward the coast in China; missionaries in China make contact with religious societies for help in leaving China. The group waits in Shanghai for visas, etc. and eventually get to a refugee camp in the Phillipines (1947-48-49). The Lokteffs arrive in this country late in the 1950's.
- 6:55 Russians leaving China in the late 1940's: "The exodus was very large actually." Many thousands of Russians left China at this time.
- 8:30 Destination of Russians leaving China at this time -- most hoped to go to the United States, but the "Red Scare" in this country made immigration difficult for many. . . "Russian refugees were not really welcome." A Christian family in Sacramento sponsors the Lokteff family and guarantees their livelihood in this area.
- 10:30 Reasons for settlement in Sacramento: The Russian settlement in Bryte attracted more Russians to this area.
- 11:20 How "Russian" was Bryte at this time?
It was a comfortable place for Russians to be among people of varied cultures, with a Russian store, in an area with definite advantages over the city of San Francisco.
- 12:31 Russian churches in Bryte (Orthodox and Baptist) welcomed the new immigrants to this neighborhood

- 13:45 The Lokteff family continues to use the Russian language; Mrs. Lokteff is able to go to the Russian grocery store and speak Russian, etc.
- 14:32 Learning to speak English at the age of 13 -- Michael learns a little English while in China (Shanghai) from the missionaries. He also continues to learn English at the refugee camp in the Philippines and is able to complete his education here in Sacramento, graduating only one year later than the regular students.
- 17:00 Michael is interested in art and he attends school in San Francisco after high school; he graduates from Sacramento State College and becomes a teacher in local schools after receiving his teaching credential.
- 17:57 Occupations: Teaching career until 1980; tour of the Soviet Union then reveals to him the need for going into the ministry to minister to "my people." Since that time he has been working as a radio broadcast minister with the Word to Russia program in Sacramento.
- 20:10 The Word to Russia: Christian mission organized in the Bay Area to serve the Russian people in the Soviet Union. Short wave radio broadcasts reach many families in Russia via transmitters in the United States, Monaco, Ecuador, Alaska, and Saipan.
- 23:06 Word to Russia production and broadcasts from the Russian Baptist Church in Bryte. . . programs are put on tape and broadcast over the air waves to the Soviet Union.
- 25:30 Russians involved in Word to Russia (and others) are from many areas. The Soviet government does not seem to be interested in "jamming" programs at this time.
- 27:18 The Lokteff family in Bryte today: Transition into the new environment in this country was "fairly easy" for Michael because he was so young when his family arrived. His family had six children.
- 28:35 Michael's father finds work in the Sacramento area in a cannery eventually, then works "later in the Pacific Railroad" in Sacramento. His parents learned English more slowly than the younger generation -- his mother still has a difficult time with English. Michael's family retains much of their Russian culture (foods, language) after settling in Bryte.

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- 0 Mr. Lokteff continues discussing Russian foods, social life in China and Bryte (centered around the church in both places), and school experiences.
- 1:0 Bryte Russian churches -- Orthodox and Baptist memberships.
- 2:26 Other Russian churches in Sacramento -- Franklin Baptist and downtown Orthodox.
- 2:47 Russian clusters of population elsewhere in Sacramento (Franklin Blvd. area).
- 4:30 The Lokteff family and their residence in Bryte. Mrs. Lokteff also migrated to Bryte from the same area in China as Michael. Her parents and the Lokteff family knew each other in China.
- 5:54 Ethnic connections in Bryte.
- 7:17 Russian cultural experiences of the Lokteff children (family history, language skills, preferred foods).
- 9:03 Russian foods and food stores in early Sacramento (gardens, special food purchases in San Francisco).
- 9:41 Connections with Russians in San Francisco: Church-related events (Pacific Coast Slavic Baptist Association); recent growth of Russian population in Bryte primarily from San Francisco retirements.
- 11:33 Bryte amenities for Russian retirees discussed.
- 12:08 Russian population in Bryte is increasing at the present time, (Russian Jews, retirees).
- 13:04 Russians in other parts of the Sacramento urban area. . . "Certainly there is no other area in Sacramento with as many Russian people as are in Bryte."